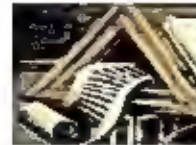
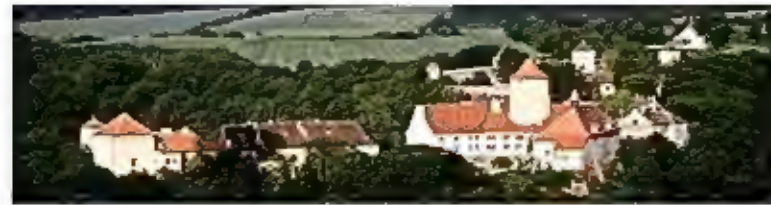


A long, long time ago,

*A half-millennium or so
Before the fax-machine,*

*Busy scribes who wondered why
The paperwork kept mounting high
Tried speeding the routine.*



Blackletter style could not advance,

Blackletter

And Humanist with solid stance

Humanist

Stayed rooted in one place.

How could they boost the pace?

*By accident or clever wile,
The scribes devised a simpler style:
Fast, yet clear. It made them smile.
They began the *Italic* hand.*





... singing:

Why, why, let handwriting die?

Pick up your pen once again for a try.

We need clear, easy letters that run till they fly.

Please don't let our handwriting die.

Never let our handwriting die.



1591
 nés pas grandement
 e gens que pour la
 e rompes une grande

1608
 ous les plus grands bie
 ndition en la vie hum

1733
 Lors que tous presageoient sa c
 Si & S. en faitz sont grands. D
 ROT, le plus grand des Roys.
 Mais quand vobres l'ame d'au

1743
 h h u y k k l l m n n o p p q r s t u
 v w x y z A B C D E F G H I J K L M
 N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z

***But generation on generation
 Of teachers added complication,
 The centuries ran on —
 Italic soon had gone,
 As every letter started to ooze
 A mass of loops and curlicues,
 We struggled,
 hung our heads,
 and felt confused.***

Aa Bb Cc Dd Ee Ff Gg Hh Ii Jj Kk Ll Mm
 Nn Oo Pp Qq Rr Ss Tt Uu Vv Ww Xx Yy Zz

***Though teachers loved those fancy curls
 Of penmanship bedecked with swirls
 And ornament supreme,
 It made some children scream ...***

Nn Oo N O



*With years of work and a scratchy pen,
Join and loop and join again,
Over and under from end to end -
Don't say we never tried.*



We started singing:

*Why, why, are we ready to cry?
Let's pick up the pen once again for a try.
We need clear, easy letters with a H O W and a W H Y.
Please don't let our handwriting die.
Never let our handwriting die.*





*The looks of it kept slipping down,
Mom and Dad began to frown,
And scribble ruled the year,
Good work did not appear ...*

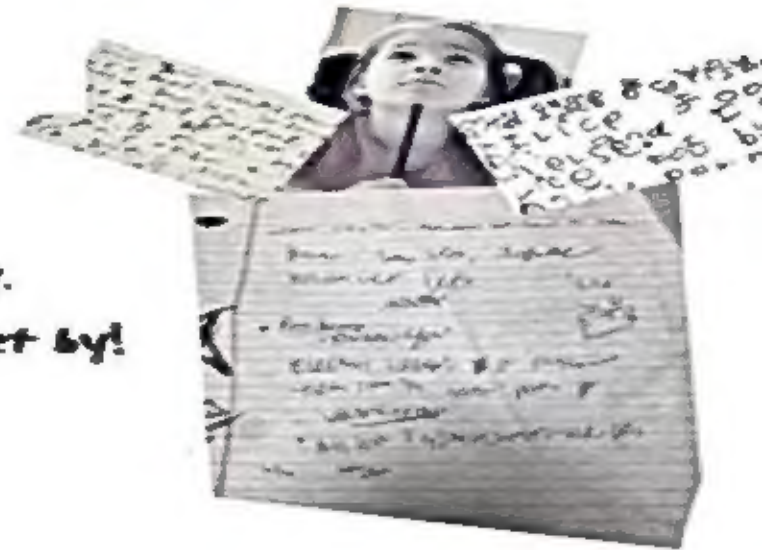
*Third-graders with a cursive text,
We squirmed and strained and felt perplexed.*

Print-then-cursive really vexed.

That way, the teaching died.

And we sang:

*Why, why,
does our handwriting do
When we pick up our pen
once again for a try?
We need cloop, speedy letters
We barely got by!
Please don't let
our handwriting do ...
never let
our handwriting do!*





*Remedial sass in a summer class,
I don't think I'll ever pass,
Grades of D and falling faster ...
Taking me down into disaster ...*

*The air in August choked with chalk
As I listened to the teacher talk.
I still remember that painful squawk:
"Your writing's got to dance!"
Well, it never got the chance ...*

*'Cause every time I moved my pen
It wouldn't do what I wanted, when
I had to swoop through the loops again ...
I paid ... 'cause Italic died.*

I started singing:

*Why, why, let handwriting die?
Got to pick up my pen once again for a try,
I need clear, easy letters for hand and for eye ...
Please don't let our handwriting die ...
Never let our handwriting die ...*



*The learning specialist sang the blues
When I expected some happy news,
He just said “**Always type,**”
then turned away ...*



*So I went down to the teacher's store
That sold handwriting books before,
But the store-clerk said:*

“Nobody writes today ... ”



*While in the classroom students snored,
Computers wiped out chalk and board,
Keyboard and cursive scribble warred.*

*No helpful word was spoken ...
The inkwells all got broken ...*



*Handwriting suffered under stress,
Memos and notes a scribbly mess,
Standards moved, left no address,
Betrayed, 'cause Italic died
Till we sang:*

Why, why, let handwriting die?

Let's pick up the pen once again for a try!

We need clear, easy letters that run till they fly ...

Please don't let our handwriting die ...

Never let our handwriting die ...

We started singing ...

We started singing ...

We started singing ...

We started WRITING !